New Hudson Oaks Dairy Queen brings back memories

HUDSON OAKS — It's an all-new DQ, with a very nostalgic look! Almost a year to the day after the Dairy Queen store in Hudson Oaks closed following a fire, the store has finally been rebuilt and reopened featuring a new design reminiscent of some of the chain's buildings of the 1950s.

Called the 1500 Series, the new store is one of the first free-standing units of its kind in the state. One of its most striking features is its central "blade" sign that combines the blue and white Dairy Queen logo of 40 years ago with the red and white Dairy Queen logo that came into use during the 1960s.

"The blue blade acts as a billboard for everything that's good about Dairy Queen," said Barney Chapman, president of The Chapman Companies, which owns it and two other DQ locations in Weatherford. "The cone with the curl on top is what made Dairy Queen famous," he added. "It conjures up pleasant memories for both young and old customers."

The store incorporates other nostalgic elements like parlor-type chairs, a crisp red, white and blue interior color scheme, a flat roof, and a predominantly white exterior similar to the old walk-up stores of the past. The only contemporary design elements are expansive use of glass windows and a colorful surreal Blizzard Flavor Treat mural on the back wall.

While the design and decor of the building wax nostalgic, the store's food preparation equipment is on the cutting edge of technology. The kitchen area includes state-of-the-art equipment that maximizes speed of service while ensuring a higher level of food quality and safety. In addition, the large front counter is set perpendicular to the soft serve preparation area and drive-through window. This enables customers to watch their soft serve products being prepared and view the candy counter display. The separation of the counter, food prep and soft serve prep areas also allow employees more ease of movement, thus improving speed of service.

Chapman said his company had hoped to remodel and reopen the Fort Worth Highway location far sooner than they did. But when the 1500 Series concept became an option, the company was willing to delay its plans in order to make it a reality.

"It's an exciting, inviting new design that you'll be seeing more and more of across the country," Chapman said. "The nostalgic design instantly symbolizes everything that's great about Dairy Queen while the new layout and facilities enable us to make our food and service live up to and exceed our customers' expectations."

Chapman said his company expects to have five more stores with the new design by the first of next year; DQ stores slated for remodeling include those in Post, Clarendon, Dalhart, and two in Seminole.

The Dairy Queen chain, now based in Minneapolis, originated in Joliet, Illinois, in 1940. The first store in Texas opened in 1947. The franchise currently has about 5,700 Dairy Queen stores in the United States, Canada, and other countries.